

over immigration policy will go unchanged when this important trade agreement takes effect.

However, CAFTA will help prevent illegal immigration in the long run by improving economic conditions in the Central American countries. By stimulating their economy and creating jobs, the tide of illegal immigrants from these nations will decrease.

Most individuals and families who come to the United States legally and illegally are simply seeking economic opportunity. The best long-term solution to illegal immigration can be achieved by encouraging economic freedom, as well as sustained growth, and the creation of sufficient opportunities and securities in their respective homelands.

I support CAFTA because it will create new economic opportunities domestically and internationally by eliminating tariffs, opening markets, permitting transparency, and establishing state-of-the-art rules for 21st-century commerce. By supporting and passing trade agreements such as CAFTA, the United States allows for greater economic incentives and opportunities in other countries. In turn, we will reduce the number of immigrants attempting to enter the United States illegally.

CAFTA is a trade agreement providing great opportunities for all nations involved.

TIME TO FUND PUBLIC TRANSIT SECURITY FUNDING

(Mr. MENENDEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, this morning, another set of apparently coordinated attacks took place on the London subway and bus system. So, once again, our thoughts and prayers are with the people of London, and our minds should be riveted back here in the United States: Madrid should have been our wake-up call; the bombings in London should have been our reminder.

How much longer must we wait for this Congress to act to secure the over 14 million Americans who use a public transit system every day to get to work? What are the consequences in the loss of lives and the economic ripple effect upon an attack on such a system?

And instead of acting on a wake-up call, the Congress seems to be hitting the snooze button. In fact, we seem to be moving backwards. Just last week, the Senate voted to cut transit security funding by one-third. How many warnings do we need before we take action? And who among us will be satisfied to say, well, we did not act fast enough, when someone we know, some constituent, some family member dies in a transit attack?

INCREASING PATIENT SAFETY

(Mr. MURPHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, last week new data was released in Pennsylvania which found more than 11,000 patients acquired infections that resulted in 1,500 deaths and \$2 billion in additional charges. These are new numbers for only one State and are almost half of the previous estimate for infection costs nationwide where tens of thousands of deaths and tens of billions of dollars are spent on infections and errors.

When staff are encouraged to immediately report safety concerns, it saves lives and money. For example, at Allegheny General Hospital in Pittsburgh, when staff were encouraged to bring attention to medical staff errors, it resulted in a 90 percent decrease in infections and half a million dollars in savings annually just in intensive care units.

Congress owes it to the American people to improve the quality of health care in this country. The Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act, of which I am a cosponsor, will increase legal protections for providers who disclose errors and a step in the right direction towards achieving this goal.

I would urge my colleagues to visit my Web site at Murphy.house.gov to learn more about improving errors and improving patient safety.

BREACH OF NATIONAL SECURITY

(Ms. LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, our government has the solemn responsibility to protect our Nation from terrorism, as today, again, we pray for the people of London.

Our ability to do that was undermined, quite frankly, 2 years ago when the identity of one of our CIA agents whose work helps keep weapons of mass destruction out of the hands of terrorists was exposed.

This breach of our national security was not really an accident. This agent's name was leaked in an act that an unnamed administration official described as revenge, political retribution against her husband for having dared to point out that the administration had knowingly distorted the evidence of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

It is now clear that President Bush's close adviser, Karl Rove, was involved in this breach of our Nation's security, and he should go. If the administration wants to have any credibility at all when they say that they want to protect the American people, then they should fire Karl Rove and anyone else who was involved in compromising our national security for petty political gain.

DREDGING OF SABINE-NECHES RIVERWAY CRITICAL FOR COMMERCE AND MILITARY

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the Sabine-Neches Riverway between Texas and Louisiana is the main shipping channel for two Texas ports in Beaumont and Port Arthur. These are energy ports and military displacement ports.

One-third of the military cargo going to and from Iraq and Afghanistan goes through this channel. The port of Beaumont has already loaded or unloaded more pieces of military cargo than any other commercial port in the United States. The port also is lined with numerous petrochemical plants and refineries. Shipments of oil, jet fuel, and liquified natural gas enter the United States through this channel. Eleven percent of the Nation's gasoline goes through this port.

But there is a problem. The Corps of Engineers does not have enough money to keep the channel dredged, so silt is creeping into the channel, ships are now having to travel the riverway without being fully loaded or they will drag bottom. To keep from dragging bottom, ships are now being loaded with one foot less amount of energy or fuel. One foot difference costs Americans \$30 million a year in gasoline prices, or 3 cents a gallon more.

The channel must be dredged or our energy situation will suffer and the consumer will pay more for gasoline. The channel must be dredged for strategic reasons so that we can get our troops the military equipment they deserve.

Congress just authorized \$23 billion of foreign aid. Maybe the Sabine-Neches Riverway Authority needs to apply for this foreign aid to get the more than \$13 million it needs to maintain this American channel. Mr. Speaker, this ought not to be.

HEALTH CARE EQUALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, this morning I would like to announce that the Democratic Tri-Caucus on Health Care is going to be convening a meeting in Chicago, Illinois. This is the Hispanic Caucus, the Black Caucus, and the Asian Caucus of the Democratic Party that will be meeting to talk about health care access.

Principally, we will be discussing a piece of legislation that we are going to be reintroducing known as the Health Care Equality and Accountability Act. It will expand health care coverage through Medicaid and the State Health Insurance Children's Program. It will remove language and cultural barriers. It will improve workforce diversity by allowing for different

community folks from our districts to be a part of the health care profession. It will also improve funded programs to help reduce health care disparities such as chronic illnesses, asthma, diabetes, and obesity.

It will improve data collection in our respective communities with respect to race, ethnicity, and language and promote accountability through the Office of Civil Rights and the Office of Minority Health at the Department of Health and Human Services. Lastly, it would help to strengthen health care institutions that serve minority populations.

We look forward to visiting our friends in Chicago, Illinois.

DEMOCRATS' TRACK RECORD: RAISE TAXES

(Mr. DOOLITTLE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, the inevitable insolvency of Social Security is not a new problem. Since the program began in 1935, the number of workers per retiree has slipped from 40 to just three today. And unless Congress acts, the system will be completely bankrupt by the year 2041.

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In light of these facts Republicans have put forth a variety of proposals to make Social Security remain solvent for future generations. But up to this point, Democrats have chosen to oppose our good faith efforts and insist that indeed there is no problem. The minority party's only solution to saving Social Security is the same solution they have applied to this problem for the past 68 years, to raise your taxes. On 50 separate occasions when faced with critical decisions to shore up Social Security, Democrats have resorted to either raising the payroll tax rate or the minimum taxable wage. It is clear their tax hikes have done nothing more than mask Social Security's inadequacies and postpone real and lasting solutions.

KARL ROVE

(Ms. WATSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, today Karl Rove continues to walk around the White House with the highest of security clearances. What does that say to our covert CIA agents risking their lives around the world? When Karl Rove became a top level White House employee, he took an oath to abide by the guidelines included in a briefing book called the Standard Form 3112. This form says, and I am quoting, "Before confirming the accuracy of what appears in the public source, the signer of SF 312 must confirm, through an authorized official, that the information has, in fact, been declassified. If it has not, confirmation of its accuracy is also an unauthorized disclosure."

Rove signed this form promising to abide by the rules. Clearly, he broke these rules when he told Reporter Matthew Cooper that Joseph Wilson's wife worked for the CIA.

Furthermore, he also broke the rule when he confirmed this same information for reporter Robert Novak. It is outrageous that Rove continues to have access to top secret information.

RU-486 KILLS WOMEN

(Mr. SMITH of New Jersey asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, the FDA issued a stern warning on Tuesday about the dangers to women from RU-486, the abortion drug the Clinton administration aggressively pushed through approval without proving its safety. Not only is RU-486 baby pesticide, killing unborn children up to 7 weeks, it is poison to the women themselves. Licensed by the Population Council, manufactured in the PRC, and widely disbursed by Planned Parenthood, at least five women have died in the U.S. after taking this dangerous drug. As a result of these women's deaths and serious concerns that many more women have died as well—underreporting is a serious problem—new drug labeling will warn women that serious danger of sepsis and blood infection can occur.

Because RU-486 was rushed to approval by the Clinton administration using the expedited FDA subpart H process, which is supposed to be used for HIV/AIDS and other life-threatening diseases, numerous safety concerns were suppressed, trivialized and overlooked. The Clinton FDA approval process was a gross sham. The approval of RU-486 is a scandal that is today killing women. The FDA must pull this dangerous drug and Congress must pass Holly's Law.

TAX REFORM

(Mr. BURGESS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, maybe we can cool things off by talking about a little tax reform. What if we had a tax reform proposal that would immediately eliminate the marriage penalty, repeal the death tax, abolish the punitive alternative minimum tax, eliminate capital gains taxes and allow for immediate expensing for business and capital equipment?

Well, in fact we have such reform. In case you missed it yesterday, in the Washington Times Steve Forbes talks about Americans deserve a flat tax, and believes that the stage is set for fundamental tax reform via the vehicle known as the flat tax. Now, fortunately Members of this body do not have to wait. They can cosponsor H.R. 1040 introduced last March that would provide for a flat tax which is voluntary to be

available to the American people as soon as it is signed into law. It is basically a measure of trusting the American people and giving them a choice to opt into a voluntary pro growth system. It does encourage investment and savings for the first time in a long time in this country. I think it is reasonable to provide another option to the American people.

Mr. Forbes concludes his article yesterday saying America has a great future. The flat tax will help us achieve it. I believe it is time to trust the American people and allow that to happen.

HOMELAND SECURITY

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I think it is appropriate this morning, now, 2 weeks to the date, that we again offer our sympathy to the people of England and particularly the City of London. Today we will rise to the floor to again discuss and debate ways of securing this land. But I feel that as Americans we know each other. We understand rhetoric versus action. It saddens me to stand here and to acknowledge that Democrats over the last years and myself as a member of the Homeland Security Committee have joined those leaders of this issue, that we have asked repeatedly for actual resources to ensure the Nation's railroads and light rail systems and bus systems, the very systems that our tourists who come to this capital of the United States utilize every single day. And time after time after time after time we have been rebuked, rejected and ignored by the Republican majority when it comes to giving resources to protecting the Nation's rail system. Yet we can give high taxes, but we cannot protect those who need to be protected. We need to do something and we need to do it now.

HONORING ARKANSAS' PARENTS OF THE YEAR

(Mr. BOOZMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, this Sunday is Parents Day, an annual day commemorating the contribution parents make to our society. Parents Day provides an opportunity to recognize and promote parenting as a central vocation for our families and communities.

In 1994 Congress passed a resolution establishing the fourth Sunday of every July as Parents Day. According to the resolution, Parents Day is established for recognizing, uplifting and supporting the role of parents and rearing of children.

And in that vein I would like to recognize one truly special set of parents,